

## Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 NEA-10

OMB-01 RSR-01 /140 W

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O P 120400Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7134

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 2432

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON, SEATO

SUBJECT: SEATO: GVN INVITATION TO ATTEND SEATO COUNCIL MEETING

REF: WELLINGTON 2391

1. I CALLED FONSEC CORNER SEPT 12 AND HANDED HIM LETTER QUOTED IN PARA 4 BELOW. AT SAME TIME HE HANDED ME A LETTER DATED SEP 11 WHICH REPLIED TO VANDIVIER AIDE MEMOIRE BUT WHICH I HAD NOT RECEIVED.

2. OPERATIVE PARAS CORNER'S LETTER FOLLOW:

QUOTE: I HAVE DISCUSSED THE QUESTION AGAIN WITH THE PRIME MINISTER. MR KIRK IS GRATEFUL FOR THE EFFORT TO FIND A COMPROMISE; BUT IN HIS VIEW THE ARRANGEMENT PROPOSED DOES NOT MOVE TOWARDS MEETING HIS OBJECTION.  
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THIS IS THAT AT THIS STAGE IN THE HISTORY OF SOUTHEAST

ASIA IT WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THE NEW IMAGE WE ARE TRYING TO GIVE TO SEATO TO ASSOCIATE IT IN ANY WAY WITH EARLIER POLICIES IN VIETNAM. UNLESS SEATO IS SEEN TO BE ADAPTING ITSELF TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEW SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IT WOULD NOT BE POLITICALLY POSSIBLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN ITS PRESENT LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR IT.

THE PRIME MINISTER THEREFORE REMAINS OPPOSED TO THE PROPOSAL TO INVITE A SOUTH VIETNAMESE OBSERVER TO THE COUNCIL MEETING. END QUOTE.

3. CORNER COMMENTED PM HAD TO KEEP HIS LEFT WING IN LINE AND THIS WAS HIS DECISION. CORNER PROMISED GIVE MY LETTER TO PM. I MAY BE ABLE SEE PM SEPT 13 DURING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE. HE HAS BEEN OUT OF TOWN SINCE SEPT 10 AND WILL NOT RETURN UNTIL LATE ON THE NIGHT OF SEPT 12.

4. TEXT MY LETTER FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: WASHINGTON HAS ASKED ME TO ASCERTAIN YOUR REACTION TO OUR AIDE MEMOIRE OF SEPTEMBER 7 ON THE QUESTION OF INVITING THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM ONLY TO SIT IN ON THE MORNING SESSION ON SEPTEMBER 28 OF THE SEATO COUNCIL WHICH WILL COVER A REVIEW OF THE GENERAL SITUATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, A MATTER OF VITAL INTEREST TO VIETNAM, ON THE BASIS THAT GIVEN OUR GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN INDOCHINA WE BELIEVE WE MUST SHOW PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR VIETNAM AT THIS TIME.

WE DO NOT PROPOSE TO INVITE VIETNAM TO THE AFTERNOON SESSION WHICH WILL DEAL WITH THE FUTURE OF SEATO AS REQUESTED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA, BECAUSE THIS IS A SUBJECT APPROPRIATE ONLY FOR MEMBERS.

WE HAVE ISSUED NO INVITATION PENDING YOUR DECISION. IN REACHING A DECISION YOU MIGHT BALANCE IN YOUR MIND THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED FOR THE CONFIDENTIAL

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GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND WITH A MAJORITY OF 22 UNDER A VERY STRONG LEADER AS COMPARED TO THE POLITICAL PROBLEM INVOLVED FOR THE FUTURE OF VIETNAM, A COUNTRY WHICH STILL KNOWS NO PEACE AND WHOSE VERY FUTURE IS UNCERATIN.

I WOULD APPRECIATE VERY MUCH YOUR URGENT AND CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND YOUR FINAL ANSWER AT YOUR

EARLIEST CONVENIENCE SINCE TIME IS NOW SHORT. END QUOTE.

WOOD

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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